

Chantal

Chantal was almost five years old when she entered kindergarten. From first grade on, she read independently apart from the class and completed the 1-8 basal reading series by grade four. She skipped fifth grade. In grades seven and eight, she was grouped with eight other bright students for enriched classes in typing, foreign language, and creative dramatics. In high school, she was placed in the "accelerated classes" for math, science, social studies, and English. She was allowed to work at her own pace in foreign language and was able to complete four years of high school Latin in two years, and three years of German in one year. During the spring semester of her senior year, she enrolled in two history classes at the local college in the afternoons for credit.

What Gifted Educational Options Were Used with Chantal?

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Juan

Juan attended a school that allowed him to move at his own pace for every academic subject from grades one to seven. He skipped eighth grade. In high school, he was placed in honors classes for mathematics, science, and social studies. During the spring semester of his senior year, he enrolled in calculus at the local college, receiving one year's college credit for his work.

What Gifted Educational Options Were Used with Juan?

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Ravi

Ravi was tested at age four; and she was found to be reading at the third-grade level with an accompanying high IQ. She was placed in first grade at age 4½ years. From grades one through five, she was grouped with other highly able students in her grade level for advanced instruction in reading and mathematics. In grade seven, she took the Scholastic Aptitude Test (normally given to high school students), achieved a high score, and was invited to participate in an accelerated mathematics program at the local college, where she received two years' high school credit for each year of program participation. In high school, she took advanced or accelerated classes in English, mathematics, science, and social studies. She was allowed to work at her own pace in German, receiving three years' credit in one year's time. In her senior year, she took the Advanced Placement (AP) courses offered at her school in English literature and calculus, scoring 5's on both AP exams. When Ravi entered college, she was given 10 credits of mathematics and six credits of English for her high AP test scores. She took additional placement tests at the university, receiving another 23 credits in foreign language and music theory.

What Gifted Educational Options Were Used with Ravi?

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Colin

Colin entered school at the "appropriate" chronological age, even though he was already reading and thinking at advanced levels. In elementary school, he was grouped with other highly able students for enriched instruction in reading and math. In grades three through five, he was also removed from his regular class along with other bright students to participate in interdisciplinary enrichment units in the sciences and humanities. In middle school, he was placed in "advanced" sections of math, social studies, science, and English, and he continued with advanced sections in mathematics and English throughout high school as well. In some academic subjects, particularly social studies and science classes at the high school level, Colin was in heterogeneous classrooms, where he learned primarily through mixed-ability cooperative groups. He and his fellow group members would divide the work on a task they shared, such as answering textbook questions or writing up a lab report. He took AP courses and exams in American history and English literature, and he received six credits, three for each course, in these subjects when he enrolled in college. In his senior year of high school, Colin took a college course on rhetoric offered at his school in the morning before classes began, and he received five credits for it when he was admitted to college. He entered college with a total of 11 college credits.

What Gifted Educational Options Were Used with Colin?

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Jana attended an “elementary school of tomorrow” that was intent on ensuring that every child could learn. Jana had her own computer and her own individualized learning plan (ILP) of activities to practice in basic skills areas, such as mathematics, language, and reading. She was encouraged to schedule her time to work on her ILP every day, although, as one of 60 students her “Master Teacher” was responsible for, she was not regularly supervised as to whether this was occurring. The teacher assumed that she was self-directed and responsible enough to do this on her own. Once every trimester, Jana signed up for general enrichment units in reading, science, and social studies (three per day), as did every other student in the school. These units often coordinated with other community facilities, such as museums, business experts, businesses, etc., to provide “real world” experiences for the students involved. Children were divided into mixed-ability learning teams in these units. No textbooks were used in any instruction, assignments were cooperatively completed and submitted, and no independent homework assignments were required of any student. Most of the instruction, whether computer-aided or in the “real world” enrichment experiences, focused on problem-solving strategies and developing research skills. Jana (and every other student in the school) was tested using an achievement test battery at the beginning and at the end of each of her three years in this new school.

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